

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**Wasatch-Cache National Forest**  
**Federal Building**  
**125 South State Street**  
**Salt Lake City, Utah 84138**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**LOGAN RANGER DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT  
PRESCRIBED BURNS**

Salt Lake City, UT Tom Tidwell, Forest Supervisor, Wasatch-Cache National Forest announced today, that the Logan Ranger District is planning to implement two prescribed burns. Depending on weather conditions, lighting of these prescribed burns could take place from September 25, 2004 through the end of October 2004.

The North Rich Burn consists of one Burn Unit totaling approximately 120 acres of aspen, mixed conifers and sagebrush. This burn area is located approximately 30 miles east of Logan, Utah and about 5 miles west of Garden City, Utah. The purpose of this burn is to re-generate aspen and sagebrush communities to improve rangeland and enhance wildlife habitat. Additional benefits include lowering the risk of insect and disease and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires through the reduction of hazardous fuels.

The second prescribed burn is Blacksmith Fork, which consists of 12 Burn Units totaling approximately 4,800 acres of aspen, mixed conifers, sagebrush and grass. **Burning these units will be accomplished over a two to three year period.** The burn areas are located approximately 10 miles southeast of Logan, Utah and 10 miles northeast of Hyrum. The purpose of the burn is restoration and maintenance of age-class diversity among aspen dominated stands. Additional benefits include the restoration of young age classes of aspen for the benefit of wildlife species and to decrease the potential for intense wildfires with detrimental effects.

(MORE)

Due to the absence of fire, historic grazing, and heavy use by big game, aspen regeneration has been hampered throughout much of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. An estimated 34% of the Aspen stands on the forest are becoming decadent and are deteriorating and need to be regenerated. Other vegetative communities, such as mixed conifers and in some areas Gambel oak and sagebrush, are replacing them. Aspen communities provide important habitat for various birds and mammals and are a significant portion of the mule deer diet. Aspen stands also provide nutrient-rich litter, which decays rapidly, forming a substantial humus layer, which reduces runoff and provides excellent soil protection. Aspen stands, are generally not considered highly flammable fuel and act as a natural fuel break during a wildfire.

Prescribed fires is one of the proven tools to use in the ecosystem for vegetation regeneration and hazardous fuels reduction as per the revised Wasatch-Cache National Forest Management Plan. To meet resource and safety concerns, prescribed fires must only occur when a specific set of conditions are met. These conditions include air quality, soil and vegetation moisture levels, temperatures, wind direction and speeds, smoke dispersal and predicted fire behavior. These prescribed fires will only be ignited when fuel moistures and weather conditions allow for smoke dispersal away from communities near the burn area. Some smoke can be expected to linger during the evening and early morning hours in communities near the burn areas. Qualified fire personnel will use hand crews and a helicopter to ignite fire in the designated area and engine and hand crews will monitor the fire area until it is completely out.

Visitors to the Forest can expect delays along the roads in the area during the day of the burns and can expect to smell smoke. The burn areas will be closed to the public on the day of the burns.

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